

Conservation Connections

St. Louis Regional Newsletter

Missouri Department of Conservation

January 2012



75 Years - Partners Make It Possible

By Jennifer Fakes Dierking, Outreach and Education Division Regional Supervisor

The Missouri Department of Conservation could not celebrate its seventy-five years of conservation success without partnerships. Local communities, organizations, and support groups all work with us to ensure the citizens of Missouri receive quality programs and events focused on the fish, forest, and wildlife resources.

The beginning of a new calendar year brings forth a multitude of fun opportunities: Eagle Days ... Maple Sugar ... Wetlands for Kids ... WOW ... Voyagers for Teachers ... Prairie Day ... These programs and many others represent years of collaboration and partnerships with various organizations and entities throughout the St. Louis region.

How do we say thank you and show our appreciation to each person who has supported the Conservation Department over the past seventy-five years? By continuing to share our passion and knowledge about the wildlife, habitats, and unique species of Missouri, and pass that information on to you through our programs and events.

Throughout the next 12 months of the *Conservation Connections* newsletter, staff and volunteers will offer new and exciting programs along with the annual favorites. I want to encourage you to take this special year as an opportunity to visit our Conservation Areas, sign up for a program, and bring someone new with you. The best compliment our staff can receive is to have you share your interest in our programs with another person (or more)!

Each area has its own identity and special features to enjoy and visit more than just once. Special events hosted in collaboration with partnering organizations provide great information not only about the areas, but also about the resources available to you from MDC and other local entities.

Seventy-five years is a solid foundation we built along with all of our partners. Building more partners over the next year is an important step to celebrating the future of Missouri's fish, forest, and wildlife resources as we continue serving nature and you!



The Missouri Department of Conservation is celebrating our 75th anniversary. On Nov. 3, 1936, voters approved Amendment Four, creating our agency and the beginning of Missouri's unique, citizen-led conservation story. Many of the successful partnerships and programs that have helped to restore the fish, forest, and wildlife resources of Missouri, as well as the challenges ahead, will be highlighted throughout the next year.

Watch for more information in the *Missouri Conservationist* magazine and on the web: www.mdc.mo.gov

Columbia Bottom Conservation Area

January 2012

801 Strodtman Road, St. Louis, MO 63138 Office hours are Wednesday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.;
Saturday - Sunday from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**For reservations call (314) 877- 6014 Wednesday through Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.;
Saturday and Sunday 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-270 north take the Riverview Drive exit (last Missouri exit); go north approximately 2.8 miles. Riverview Drive becomes Columbia Bottom Road at its intersection with Larimore Road. The entrance is on the right-hand side.

Visit www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/areas/bottom

14 & 15

Eagle Days at the Columbia Bottom Confluence

Saturday & Sunday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

(All Ages) So, you've visited the old Chain of Rocks Bridge this weekend and had a great time. What's next? Take another look from a different vantage point. View eagles as they soar over the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. Scopes will be set up to zoom in on these magnificent birds. There will be a warming tent, short walks, and photography workshops. We look forward to seeing you at Columbia Bottom! (Reservations only required for photography workshops listed below.)



14 & 15

Photography 101: Getting the Most with the Least

Saturday & Sunday 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

(Ages 8 & Up) So, you want to achieve the effects of more expensive camera set-ups? MDC Urban Forester, Perry Eckhardt, will offer composition basics and show you how to utilize some simple settings. After the indoor portion, an MDC Naturalist will lead the group outdoors to some photo-op spots. Be sure to dress for the weather. Check out <http://www.flickr.com/photos/perryeck> for Perry's photos. (Reservations begin January 4.)

21 Sleepy Bears

Saturday 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

(Ages 5 & Up) Who is snug in their winter beds? Of course the bears are hibernating, but ladybugs, turtles, and bats are also sound asleep. Explore these sleepy winter animals through stories, games, and crafts. (Reservations begin January 7.)

Eagle Days at the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge

Saturday, January 14, and Sunday, January 15, from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. each day

It's time again to bundle up your family and join the excitement of viewing eagles along the Mississippi River from the historic Chain of Rocks Bridge. Eagle lovers of all ages are invited to watch eagles fishing, riding the ice floes, soaring overhead or roosting in nearby trees. Viewing scopes will be stationed on the Bridge to allow close-ups of eagles. Re-enactors will interact with the public and acquaint visitors with aspects of Lewis & Clark's 1804-06 expedition, the Corps of Discovery. Don't miss the raising and lowering of the flag at 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. at the Missouri Bridge entrance! Educational displays at the Illinois entrance include a replica of the boat used by the Corps of Discovery.

Get your photo taken in a replica of an eagle's nest! The World Bird Sanctuary will present an educational eagle program with a live eagle every 20 minutes beginning at 10:00 a.m. The last presentation will begin at 2:40 p.m.

Free parking is available at two satellite lots in Missouri: the St. Louis Welcome Center at Riverview Drive and I-270 and North Riverfront Park which is off Riverview Drive south of the waterworks. A free shuttle will be available from both locations. Free parking is also available at the Illinois Bridge entrance. Parking at the Missouri Bridge entrance costs \$5.

Visitors are encouraged to dress warmly, wear comfortable shoes and leave their pets at home. Eagle viewing occurs at the center of the Bridge, a half-mile walk from each Bridge entrance.

January 2012

August A. Busch Memorial Conservation Area

2360 Hwy D, St. Charles, MO 63304 Office hours are Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

For reservations call (636) 441- 4554 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-40 take Hwy 94 south to Hwy D; turn west on Hwy D for approximately 2 miles. The area entrance is on the north side of Hwy D. Visit www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/cnc/busch



5 Crazy Critters: Wild Mammals

Thursday 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

(Ages 6 & Up) Armadillos and flying squirrels are just two of the wild and amazing mammals that call Missouri home. Come learn about these and other crazy Missouri mammals. We will also do an armadillo craft. (Reservations begin December 22.)

7 Dresser Island Conservation Area Hike

Saturday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

(Adults) Where is there a place in winter that you can hike along a big river and see pelicans, ducks, geese, eagles, muskrat houses, and possibly trumpeter swans? Head out to Dresser Island located near West Alton in St. Charles County. Join us for a 6.5 mile hike as we look for wildlife along the Mississippi River and enjoy the winter scenery that our big rivers offer so near to St. Louis. (Reservations begin December 23.)

12 Winter Wonderland

Thursday 10 a.m. - 11 a.m.

(Ages 3 - 6) It is always fun to play outside, but winter can be so cold! Bring the little ones out for story and craft time, and enjoy the wonders of winter without having to leave the comfort of the indoors. (Reservations begin December 29.)



21 Owl Prowl

Saturday 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

(Families) Being in the woods at night is an adventure. Ever wonder "who's" awake while you're sleeping? Come learn about owls and take a short hike in hopes of hearing one call back! (Reservations begin January 6.)



Forest Park Office

5595 Grand Drive, St. Louis, MO 63112 Office hours are Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

For reservations call (314) 877-1309 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-44 take Kingshighway north to West Pine Boulevard, turn left. Follow West Pine to Lindell, turn left onto Lindell. Continue on Lindell past Union Drive to Cricket, turn left. Take first available right onto Grand Drive. The Visitors Center is the tan brick, red tile-roofed building with arched windows, and a clock tower. It will be on the right side of the street. Free parking is available in the double lot to the left or on the street.

Reality Series Coming This January to MDC!

If you're looking for programs at Forest Park this month, we're off-site putting the finishing touches on a production called Eagle Days, which is set to air the 14th and 15th of January from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge.

By nature, January's wildlife is cold and calculating, and there's no better schemer than the bald eagle. While its behavior is self-serving, some of us have to admit, it is mesmerizing!

So, if you want to see a cast of characters who will keep your interest while they're keeping it real, watch the eagles. You never know what those calculating raptors will do.

Sign up to receive a direct link on-line to **Conservation Connections** by visiting www.mdc.mo.gov/user_mailman_register

Rockwoods Reservation

January 2012

2751 Glencoe Road, Wildwood, MO 63038 Office hours are Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

For reservations call (636) 458-2236 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-44 take Hwy 109 north 4 miles to Woods Avenue; left on Woods Avenue, then immediately right on Glencoe Road. From Manchester Road take Hwy 109 south 2 miles to Woods Avenue; right on Woods Avenue, then immediately right on Glencoe Road.

Visit <http://www.mdc.mo.gov/regions/st-louis/rockwoods-reservation>

19 Backyard Maple Sugaring

Thursday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

(Adults) So you've got maple trees and you love maple syrup... join this program to learn how to develop your very own backyard maple syrup and maple sugar operation. You'll learn sugar maple tree identification, details of tree tapping, cooking methods and finishing your sap to syrup. Join the growing community of maple sugaring enthusiasts and gain experience in every step of the process by working with our Naturalists. (Reservations begin January 5.)

20 Tree Tapping for Families

Friday 10 a.m. - Noon

(Ages 7 & Up) Maple sugaring is here and it's time to tap the trees! Join this program to make maple syrup fun for your family, even if you only have one or two trees. You will learn about sugar maples, how to tap trees and what equipment to use to turn sap into syrup. Please dress for the weather because much of this program is outside. (Reservations begin January 6.)

20 Owl Prowl

Friday 6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.

(Families) Who's that hooting it up during the night in January? Owls, that's who. You will learn what makes them such effective night-time hunters and why they hoot so much this time of year. We will also discuss why it is so important that we protect these incredible birds and their habitat. Please dress for the weather since we will be going outside to try to hear some of these elusive nocturnal predators. We will be focusing on those owls that you might find in our state. (Reservations begin January 6.)



21 Backyard Maple Sugaring

Saturday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

(Adults) So you've got maple trees and you love maple syrup... join this program to learn how to develop your very own backyard maple syrup and maple sugar operation. You'll learn sugar maple tree identification, details of tree tapping, cooking methods and finishing your sap to syrup. Join the growing community of maple sugaring enthusiasts and gain experience in every step of the process by working with our Naturalists. (Reservations begin January 6.)

Maple Sugaring at Rockwoods Reservation -

Maple Sugar Festival, Saturday, February 4

It's here! The maple sugaring season begins this January with tree tapping and preparations of tools and supplies. Join a Backyard Maple Sugaring workshop and mark your calendar for Saturday, February 4, 2012 to attend the Maple Sugar Festival.

Busch Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center

January 2012

2360 Hwy D, St. Charles, MO 63304

Hours are: December 1 - March 31 open Monday, Tuesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

April 1 - November 30 open Monday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., and Tuesday from 2 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Closed all State and Federal Holidays.

For program reservations call (636) 441-4554 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-40 take Hwy 94 south to Hwy D; turn west on Hwy D for approximately 5 miles. The area entrance is on the south side of Hwy D. Visit <http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/ranges/busch>

1 Range Closed for New Year's Day Holiday

11 Discover Hunting: Rabbit Hunting Clinic

Wednesday 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.



(Ages 11 & Up) There's no doubt about it: rabbit hunting is an exciting and fantastic sport.

Come join us to learn tips and techniques of rabbit hunting. We will cover safety, habitat, firearms, ammunition, hunting with or without dogs and scouting for rabbits. The clinic will be held in the classrooms at the Busch CA Headquarters. (Reservations begin December 12.)

18 Discover Hunting: Predator Hunting

Wednesday 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

(All Ages) Need a challenge? Hunt higher up on the food chain. You will learn different techniques for hunting predators. We will discuss safety, calls, set ups, firearms, clothing, and optics. The program will be held in the classrooms at the Busch CA Headquarters. (Reservations begin December 19.)



21 Map and Compass

Saturday 9 a.m. - Noon

(Ages 11 & Up) Low tech? Don't trust a GPS? In today's world of electronic gadgets many people do not know this easy skill which requires no batteries or satellite signals to help you if you become lost or are looking for a particular location. This is a great opportunity for all to learn how to properly read maps and use a compass. We will start in the classrooms at the Busch CA Headquarters and then proceed outside to find some marked locations without the use of today's modern conveniences. Dress for the weather! (Reservations begin December 19.)

MANAGED DEER HUNTS -A MANAGEMENT TOOL

Missouri offers numerous managed deer hunts for archery, crossbow, muzzleloading and modern firearms from mid-September through January. These hunts achieve deer management goals while also providing additional hunting opportunity. Hunters are selected by a weighted random drawing system.

One of the new hunts this year will be held at Powder Valley. The deer population for the 112 acres is more than five times the desired density. Long term, the effects of this level of deer numbers include significant habitat destruction, a higher disease rate, and stress. The area will be closed from January 7 through January 9 for a small managed archery hunt. This will be a "doe first" hunt, as doe numbers directly impact population growth.

Hunters applied for managed hunts between July 1 and August 15. The drawing results were posted on-line and can be viewed through December 31. Those selected must purchase a special Managed Deer Hunting Permit. Deer taken at a managed hunt do not count toward the regular season bag limit.

Thirty managed deer hunts and three managed *youth* deer hunts are being held in the St. Louis Region during the 2011-2012 season. You can visit http://mdc.mo.gov/sites/default/files/resources/2010/03/fdt2011_web_opt1.pdf for a complete list.

Some areas with managed hunts in progress stay open, while others close entirely or limit access to some portion of the area. For your safety, and to allow hunters a fair hunt, please follow instructions posted regarding managed hunts at those areas.

For a complete listing of all Hunter Education and Bowhunter Education classes throughout the region, visit the web at www.mdc.mo.gov and click on the "Hunter Education" link on the right of the page.

Jay Henges Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center

1100 Antire Road, High Ridge, MO 63049

Range Hours: May 1 - August 31: Wednesday 1 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., Thursday - Sunday 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

September 1 - April 30: Wednesday - Sunday 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays and all State and Federal Holidays.

For program reservations call (636) 938-9548 Wednesday through Sunday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From the east/St. Louis: I-44 west to Beaumont/Antire Road, exit 269. Left over I-44 to Antire Road. Right on Antire road. One hundred feet to entrance. Left into driveway. From the west/Eureka: I-44 east to Beaumont/Antire Road, exit 269. Follow exit lane around to top.

Visit <http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/ranges/henges>

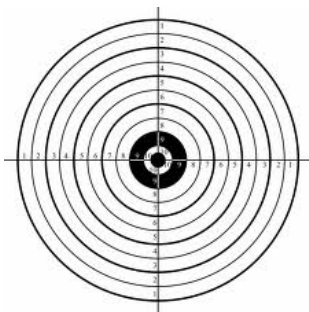
1 Range Closed for New Year's Day Holiday

5 & 7 Basic Handgun, Part 1 & 2

Thursday 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Saturday 8 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

(Ages 16 & Up) This two-part program will include handgun operation, shooting fundamentals, safety, maintenance, and safe storage. We will start with a classroom session on Thursday evening, then a live-fire session on Saturday morning. Although equipment and ammunition will be provided, you may bring your own. Those under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. (Reservations begin December 5.)



21 Trigger Time - Handgun

Saturday 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

(Ages 18 & Up) Trigger Time is "hands-on" personal instruction designed to make you a better marksman. There is no classroom time, just expert one-on-one instruction from one of our highly qualified staff. The instructor will observe shooting by each individual participant and offer suggestions on grip, stance, trigger-pull, sight alignment and the safe handling of firearms - as all may be relevant. Participants will be required to provide their own handguns and ammunition (at least 50 rounds). (Reservations begin December 21.)



25 Shotshell Reloading Made Easy

Wednesday 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

(Ages 16 & Up) Due to the rising cost of shotshell ammunition, this is your opportunity to learn the inexpensive process of reloading shotgun shells using simple equipment. The technique is easy and will save you money over the cost of factory ammunition. This is a hands-on learning class; we'll produce quality shotshells with low-cost equipment. (Reservations begin December 26.)



18 Metallic Cartridge Reloading Simplified

Wednesday 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

(Ages 11 & Up) Since factory rifle ammunition may cost \$35 or more per box, it is worth the time and effort to learn how to reload your own rifle ammunition. We will demonstrate the low cost, basic equipment needed for reloading rifle cartridges, and the simple methods of producing quality, accurate ammunition. (Reservations begin December 18.)



Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center

11715 Cragwold Road, Kirkwood, MO 63122

Building hours: Tuesday through Saturday: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday and Monday: Closed

Area and trails: Open seven days a week 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. during Central Standard Time and 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. during Daylight Saving Time.

6 Go Wild! Landscaping for Wildlife

Friday 1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

(Adults) Does your yard entice wildlife? Would you like it to? Come explore some of the many choices Missourians have in the way of native trees, shrubs, and flowering plants, as well as water features and other structures. Come in and learn how you can consider wildlife as you landscape, whether you would like to make small changes in your yard or begin a complete renovation! (Reservations begin December 23.)

18 I Like to Move It, Move It!

Wednesday 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

(Ages 3 - 6) Take a close look at animal movement and behavior. Learn how animals use different parts of their body to function and survive in the wild. Dramatic play, live animals, and a hike (weather permitting) will be a part of this "moving" experience! (Reservations begin January 4.)

21 Jr. Audubon: Birds on The Move

Saturday 10:00 a.m. - Noon

(Ages 7-12) Annual bird migration adds great excitement to observing wild birds throughout the year. Join us for another special joint program of the St. Louis Jr. Audubon and the Missouri Department of Conservation as we play "The Great Migration Challenge" game. We will also be making cool eagle gliders and observe wild winter migrant birds in action. (Reservations begin January 9.)



27 An Evening with Raptors

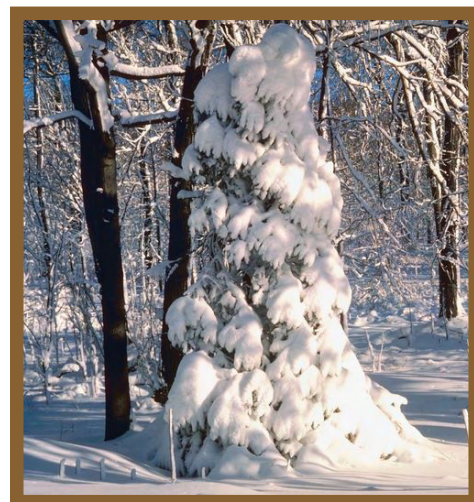
Friday 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

(All Ages) The Raptors are back! Join us as we welcome Missouri falconers and their hunting partners! Falconry is a sport reported as far back as 700 B.C.E. and is still practiced today. Learn what falconry is and how to become a falconer. The evening will begin in the auditorium with a presentation on raptors in general and the birds you will see following the presentation. After the presentation you will have an opportunity for an up-close and personal "meet and greet" in the classrooms. You will be able to ask questions of the falconers and see the birds and equipment up close! Be sure to bring your cameras. **Reservations are required.** (Reservations begin January 3.)

31 Trees in Winter

Tuesday 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

(Ages 10 & Up) It's winter. How do forest trees survive? The wind whistles through their bare branches and snow piles up on them. The trees look dead, but are they? We will discuss how trees adapt to the changing season. Also, we can identify familiar trees in summer by their leaves, but what about in winter? Join us for a hands-on experience identifying trees in winter, both indoors and outside. (Reservations begin January 17.)



Managed Hunt Notice:

Powder Valley's building and trails will be closed from January 7 through January 9 for a small managed archery hunt. More information available on the Busch Range page.



Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center

For reservations call (314) 301-1500

January 2012

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with five days notice. From I-44 take Lindbergh (Route 61/67) to Watson Road. Go west on Watson Road to Geyer Road. Go north on Geyer Road to Cragwold Road then one mile west on Cragwold Road. Visit www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/cnc/powder

January Hallway Exhibit

Mingo Swamp Photo Contest

The 7th annual Mingo Swamp Photo Contest exhibit is now making its way around the state of Missouri. The exhibit is currently on display at Powder Valley Nature Center during January. This year's Best-in-Show winner is Bill Brennan of Marble Hill, Missouri.

With three divisions... **Youth** (17 and under) **Adult** (18 and over) and **Professional** and five categories... **Mingo Landscape**, **Mingo Native Wildlife**, **Mingo Native Plant**, **Artistically Enhanced** (photo suitable for entry in any of the other four categories which has been enhanced), and **People in Nature**. Any nature photographer of any age is encouraged to enter the 2012 contest. A gallery of 1st place winning images, as well as 2012 contest entry forms and rules can be found on line at www.mingoswampfriends.org



Contributors who make this contest possible are Drury Southwest, Inc. and the Missouri outdoor news journal River Hills Traveler. The contest is sponsored by Mingo NWR, US Fish & Wildlife Service, and Mingo Swamp Friends Photo Club.

Volunteer Accomplishments



VOLUNTEER MILESTONES

Tom Bayer 2000 hours

Ray Zimmerman 2000 hours

Powder Valley recently celebrated special accomplishments of four volunteers. Dick Wasson, Neva Wasson, and Jack McGinnis each reached the 5500 hour milestone. Alma Dulz reached her 5000 hour milestone. These volunteers, along with Powder Valley's other 45 volunteers, have helped make Powder Valley a fun and welcoming place. Thank you Dick, Neva, Jack, and Alma!

This publication is produced locally. Please e-mail us at ConservationConnections@mdc.mo.gov with questions, comments, or concerns. Thank you.